

JERICHO PLANNING AREA

Jericho Planning Area

PLANNING AREA PROFILE:

Location

The Jericho Planning area is located in the central portion of the Town of Smithfield, just southeast of the Downtown Area. It is bounded on the north by the Downtown Area and Little Creek, on the south and west by the Route 10 Bypass and on the east by Cypress Creek. The Planning Area consists of approximately 331 acres.

Existing Land Use and Transportation System

The Jericho Planning Area is a largely undeveloped area marked by the presence of valuable environmental and historic resources. It is the home of Windsor Castle, a farm estate overlooking Cypress Creek which has been preserved in its pristine state and serves as one of the most cherished historic resources in the Town. The only densely developed area within the Planning Area is the residential area adjacent to Cedar Street which fronts Little Creek. This area is home to a mix of single family detached residences, apartments and retirement facilities. Since the last Plan was adopted in 1992, a new residential subdivision, Jericho Estates has been developed to the east of Jericho Road. This development includes twenty-one estate lots planned for low density single family detached residences. Considered together, existing development accounts for approximately 38 total acres in the Planning Area, or roughly 11% of the total land area. The balance of the Planning Area consists of vacant farmland, passive open space and sensitive environmental areas.

Cedar Street and Jericho Road provide the principal means of access in and out of the Planning Area. Both of these roads function as rural parkways connecting the low density development and historic resources with the nearby urban center of the Town. Neither of these roads are designed to handle high volumes of vehicular traffic; in fact, neither have marked pavement. The Planning Area enjoys no access from the adjacent State Route 10 Bypass, which is a limited access state highway. Access was granted to the neighboring Cypress Creek subdivision on the condition that no access be provided to the north into the Planning Area. The Town feared that access into the area would threaten the stability of the preserved Windsor Castle property and the valuable farmland that surrounds it. The Town still supports this strategy today, and no access is likely to be made available to the Planning Area in the foreseeable future.

Existing Environmental Considerations

The Planning Area's development potential is seriously constrained by the presence of Little Creek and Cypress Creek along its northern and eastern boundaries, respectively. Little Creek bisects the northwestern portion of the Planning Area and forms a natural transitional boundary between the residential development along Cedar Street and the adjacent Downtown Area and Windsor Castle and the surrounding farmland. Although only 11% of the total Planning Area, approximately 41 acres, have topographic and wetland characteristics which make them unsuitable for urban development, these marshlands and tidal waterways would be seriously impacted by development on adjacent ridges and

should be protected. Of the Planning Area's 330.6 total acres, approximately 277 (84%) have been identified as having prime development potential. However, the entire Planning Area drains directly into these two major waterways; thus, any future development of the land suitable for development in the area must incorporate appropriate stormwater management principles in its design in order to sufficiently protect these valuable water resources.

Jericho LAND USE PLAN

The Jericho Planning Area is planned for the preservation of its valuable historic and environmental resources, the conservation of its vast amount of undeveloped farmland, and the gradual expansion of the residential area between Cedar Street and Little Creek. Primary emphasis is placed upon the Town being proactive with respect to protecting one of its most cherished historic resources, the Windsor Castle estate, as well as the surrounding farmland which overlooks both Cypress Creek and Little Creek. In the following sections, specific land use recommendations are presented for the three Sub-Areas identified in the Jericho Planning Area.

Sub-Area 1 Recommendations

Sub-Area 1 is located in the northwestern portion of the Jericho Planning Area. It is bounded on the north and east by the residential and public uses adjacent to Cedar, Hill and West Main streets, on the west by the Route 10 Bypass and on the south by Little Creek. Sub-Area 1 is heavily wooded and overlooks Little Creek. It covers approximately 28 acres and is planned for attached residential development, at a density of 6-8 dwelling units per acre. At this proposed density, Sub-Area 1 could support between 65 and 87 new dwelling units within its 10.9 net developable acres.

The major issues involved with the potential development of this Sub-Area are (1) the appropriate density and intensity of use of future development and (2) sensitive environmental issues. The vast majority of the net developable property within the Sub-Area is owned by the West Main Street Baptist Church. A representative of the church outlined its vision for the future development of the property during a public input session held by the Town during the development of the Comprehensive Plan and the revised Town Zoning Ordinance, and the Town subsequently endorsed this plan. The long term plan for the property includes the development of single family detached residences on the vacant developable property south of Cedar Street and the reservation of the right to develop an assisted living facility on the property adjacent to the Covenant Place retirement facility. The Attached Residential land use designation complements the stated vision for the property by supporting the projected density and range of uses included in the plan, and the existing Attached Residential (A-R) zoning designation allows the property owner to develop single family detached residences by right and the assisted living project by obtaining a special use permit from the Town.

The assisted living facility would fulfill a need expressed several times by citizens in the survey distributed as part of the Comprehensive Planning process. Furthermore, the ridges overlooking the banks of Little Creek offer dramatic views for the development of well-sited, low density single family homes. It will be imperative that the Town ensure that these planned single family homes are thoughtfully sited and

incorporate suitable stormwater management practices that will minimize the impact of future development on the creek and downstream waters.

Sub-Area 2 Recommendations

Sub-Area 2 is located in the central portion of the Jericho Planning Area. It is bounded on the north by Little Creek and the residential neighborhood adjacent to South Church Street, on the west by the Route 10 Bypass, on the south by the existing Jericho Estates residential development and the Route 10 Bypass and on the east by Cypress Creek. The 221.0 acre sub-area is planned for community conservation. This land use designation allows extremely low density residential development at a ratio of up to 1 dwelling unit per acre. At this density, approximately 136 single family detached dwelling units could be located within the sub-area's 143.3 net developable acres, assuming that a special use permit could be obtained for the site. However, citizen survey responses expressed a strong desire to conserve the land adjacent to the two creeks, as well as the adjacent Windsor Castle property, so the likelihood of achieving even this low density level on the entire undeveloped property would be extremely low given existing sentiment within the community.

The major issues involved with the potential development of this sub-area are (1) the provision of public utilities, (2) preserving the existing historic resources and sensitive environmental areas, (3) the recognition of the impact of future development on the Windsor Castle estate and (4) promoting pedestrian linkages to South Church Street and the Downtown Area. Currently, the sub-area lacks sufficient access to public water and sewer service to support future development. A 12" water line extends along Cedar Street and up Jericho Road to Joshua Road where an 8" water line extends to serve the Jericho Estates subdivision. In order to provide public water service to the Sub-Area, the 12" line would have to be extended further northward on Jericho Road. Any future development in the sub-area would also have to include provisions for running a sewer line from the 30" HRSD pipe that runs parallel to the Route 10 Bypass to allow each residence to tap into the line. The adjacent Jericho Estates subdivision was developed on a private septic system, and thus, no public sanitary sewer lines were extended into the sub-area. The Town no longer allows private well and/or septic systems for new residential construction; therefore, it will be necessary to construct a sewer line connecting to the 30" HRSD sewer line in order to allow development in the sub-area. It is assumed by the Town that the developer(s) of the vacant land in Sub-Area 2 will be entirely responsible for constructing the utility line extensions needed to support the planned development in the Area.

Sub-Area 2 is heavily wooded and includes substantial environmentally sensitive areas that should be conserved and protected from future development. In particular, the wooded areas adjacent to Little Creek are valuable to the local ecosystem and to citizens within the community whom have expressed a strong desire to preserve the areas as they appear today. The sub-area also incorporates a substantial portion of the farmland included in the Windsor Castle estate. The Windsor Castle estate represents one of the last remaining prime, pristine waterfront properties in the Town. Any future development of the farmlands included in the estate should be conscious of the future impacts on the Windsor Castle estate and on the significant environmental resources in the area. Any planned development project within this Sub-Area should only be permitted on the condition that they incorporate modern stormwater management, erosion and sedimentation control measures and site planning practices to ensure that the development responds appropriately to its surroundings and protects the creek, its surrounding marshlands and other sensitive environmental areas in the sub-area and downstream areas.

The entire Windsor Castle estate is included in the Town's Historic District and includes the main farm house and an extensive collection of outbuildings sited next to open fields. The sub-area incorporates each of these main structures and the surrounding fields between Jericho Road and Cypress Creek. Presently, the Windsor Castle estate is privately held by a local landowner who has expressed a commitment to ensuring that the property or at least a portion of the property be preserved in perpetuity in a manner that is in keeping with the balance of the Historic Area. The Town Council recently cited the preservation of Windsor Castle as one of its ten most important strategic goals for the Town in 1999.

The preservation of Windsor Castle could provide a significant impetus towards meeting the Town's established goals of boosting tourism in the area and providing more public open space for its citizens. However, in order to ensure that the project achieves its full potential, the Town should incorporate the historic site into its tourism marketing strategy and should provide the necessary physical improvements to increase pedestrian accessibility to the estate. In order to achieve this, the Town should promote pedestrian linkages to the site from South Church Street and the Downtown Area. Windsor Castle is currently connected to South Church Street and the Downtown Area by an original cobblestone road (Jericho Road) that has been preserved, offering a charming walk for residents and visitors exploring beyond the Victorian homes that line South Church Street. The Town should explore the feasibility of increasing its promotion of this walkway as part of historic walking tours, thereby strengthening the connection between the estate and the balance of the Historic Area. The Town should also continue its policy of discouraging the use of Jericho Road as a means of vehicular movement between Jericho Estates and Windsor Castle to South Church Street and vice-versa, however, due to the limited capacity of the Jericho Road/South Church Street intersection.

Sub-Area 3 Recommendations

Sub-Area 3 is located in the southeastern portion of the Jericho Planning Area. It is bounded on the north and west by a tributary of Cypress Creek, on the south by the Route 10 Bypass and on the east by Cypress Creek. The 28.6 acre Sub-Area is planned for community conservation. This land use designation allows extremely low density residential development at a ratio of up to 1 dwelling unit per acre. At this density, approximately ten single family detached dwelling units could be located within the Sub-Area's 10.4 net developable acres, assuming that a special use permit could be obtained for the site.

The major issues involved with the potential development of this Sub-Area are (1) vehicular access, (2) provision of public utilities and (3) sensitive environmental areas. Presently, the only vehicular access into the Sub-Area is provided by a dirt road extension of Cedar Street beginning at its intersection with Jericho Road and running parallel to the Route 10 Bypass. This road will need to be improved as at least a single lane meeting VDOT's rural street standards in order to serve the residential development planned for this Sub-Area. As explained in more detail in the Transportation chapter (see Chapter X), the Town recognizes the need to improve this road and includes it in planning for transportation improvements. It is anticipated that these improvements will only be made in coordination with the future development of Sub-Area 4.

The Sub-Area also currently lacks access to sufficient public utilities to develop the land as is recommended. An 8" water line terminates at the end of Trumpet Road in the Jericho Estates subdivision and would need to be extended to provide public water to the Sub-Area. Any future development in the Sub-Area would have to include provisions for running a sewer line from the 30" HRSD pipe that runs parallel to the Route 10 Bypass to allow each residence to tap into the line.

Consideration of sensitive environmental areas will also play an important role in the future development of the Sub-Area. The homesites should be sited well away from the wooded areas that offer a natural buffer from the marshlands surrounding Cypress Creek and its tributaries. The residences should incorporate stormwater management practices and erosion and sedimentation control measures sufficient to protect and preserve these marshlands and waterways, as well as downstream ecosystems.

FUTURE LAND USE SUMMARY

The Comprehensive Plan projects the Jericho Planning Area as a largely undeveloped area devoted to the preservation of valuable historic and environmental resources, the conservation of open space and the provision of much-needed public park space. Intermingled within these historic resources and protected open spaces, the Planning Area maintains the capability to develop scattered low density single family residential development that would complement the existing single family subdivisions that exist in the Area, as well as reserving the right to develop an assisted living facility targeting local retirees near Cedar Street.

The Jericho Planning Area has the potential to accommodate between approximately 211 and 233 new households at full build-out. However, it is highly unlikely that this density will actually be met within the

Planning Area, at least in the near planning term, given the dominance of C-C, Community Conservation zoning ascribed to parcels within the Area. The C-C zoning district was created to provide a vehicle by which agricultural, forestry, open space and other lands of rural character within the Town may be maintained in their current use on an interim basis until such point in time when development consistent with the adopted Future Land Use Plan may be pursued through a zoning amendment. New residential subdivisions are not permitted in this district, except by special use permit for subdivisions with not more than five lots. All proposed subdivisions for residential purposes must be individually rezoned to a residential zoning district compatible with the Comprehensive Plan and pursuant to provisions of the Zoning Ordinance. Thus, a substantial change to the future land use plan designation for the property and a rezoning of the property would be necessary to reach the range of total new dwelling units projected above.

This Planning Area is particularly important because it affords the Town an opportunity to exhibit its firm commitment to meeting two of its primary strategic goals: preserving the Windsor Castle property and providing more public park space for its residents and visitors. No future development should take place in the Planning Area until the required, extensive utility and transportation improvements are completed.

The table on the following page summarizes the development potential of each of the Sub-Areas as recognized in the Plan.

FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

JERICO PLANNING AREA

Sub-Area	Sub-Area Acreage	Net Developable Acreage	Recommended Land Use	Density	Yield
1	27.8	10.9	Attached Residential	6-8	65 - 87 du
2	221.0	143.3	Community Conservation	1	136 - 136 du
3	28.6	10.4	Community Conservation	1	10 - 10 du
Sub-Area Total	277.4	164.6	Estimated Totals: Attached Residential Community Conservation		65 - 87 du 146 - 146 du
Sensitive Environmental Areas	41.0				
Existing Urban Development	38.0				
Planning Area Total	330.6	164.6			

* Based upon existing platted lot yield in S.A. 2